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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
[February 24, 2017]

Howard County Sheriff Department and Kokomo Police Departments Kick Off 2017 March Enforcement Campaign On Dangerous and Impaired Driving.

Kokomo, IN. – The Howard County Sheriff Department and Kokomo Police Department announced today they will join efforts with over 250 Indiana state and local law enforcement agencies to increase education and enforcement around dangerous and impaired driving. From March 3 through March 26, 2017, officers across the state will conduct high-visibility patrols specifically designated to identify and intercept those driving aggressively and under the influence.

“As a state known for basketball hysteria, March is a time of celebration and fun here in Indiana,” said HCSD Corporal Justin Markley. “Throw in St. Patrick’s Day as well, and its critical we drive home the message that the only way to celebrate, is responsibly. For this reason, our officers will be working day and night all across the state looking out for our fellow Hoosiers, because if we do see you driving dangerously or impaired, we will pull you over.”

Increased enforcement during March is a statewide effort supported by federal funding allocated to both agencies from the Traffic Safety Division of the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute (ICJI). Approximately 10 officers from both agencies will work overtime to conduct observational patrols and sobriety checkpoints around the clock.

According to ICJI, in March 2016 there were 495 alcohol-related crashes across Indiana, resulting in 231 injuries and 11 fatalities. Additionally, during the same period, crash reports indicate 1,128 collisions occurred due to dangerous driving, resulting in 260 injuries and two fatalities. Dangerous driving includes factors such as “speed too fast for weather conditions,” “driver distracted,” and “driver asleep or fatigued.”

“Protecting all those traveling Indiana’s roadways is an action we do not take lightly,” said ICJI Executive Director Dave Murtaugh. “With various celebratory events taking place during the month of March, it’s important we remind all drivers and passengers the responsibility of staying safe on the road, lies at their feet. I want to thank our hard working and dedicated officers who will be out in full patrol working to ensure this message is front and center in the mind of all those behind the wheel. The key to safe travel is simple. Buckle up and drive sober.”

Crashes resulting from dangerous and impaired driving are preventable. The Howard County Sheriff Department and Kokomo Police Department and ICJI would like to remind motorists safe driving is as simple as following these easy steps:

- Before the celebration begins, **plan a safe way home**
- **Do not drive impaired**
- If you do drink, **use a taxi, public transportation, ridesharing service or designate a sober friend or family member, and give them your keys**
- **If you see a drunk driver on the road, call 911**

- If you know someone who is about to drive or ride impaired, **take their keys and help make arrangements to get them home safely**

For more information on Indiana's efforts on impaired driving prevention and enforcement, please visit:
<http://www.in.gov/cji/2354.htm>.

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